

NEW YORK STATE CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS, INC.

-Branch of the National

H.B. Thompson Middle School

President and Co-President: Jen Poitrimol and Karen Ostrick

September 9, 2021

Meeting called to order at 7:48PM via Zoom by President and Co-President: Jen Poitrimol and Karen Ostrick

I. Approve minutes from the last meeting: The June 2021 meeting minutes was approved. Thank you!

II. President's Report- Jen Poitrimol

A. First and foremost, Karen and I want to thank everyone for joining tonight. We are excited for this year and the fact that we can have all our children back in school full time. We also want to thank Mr. Bonanno, his team and the administration for all of their hard work in getting everyone back full time and making sure HBT continues to be the warm, open place for every child. Focusing on making kids feel comfortable these opening weeks have really helped allay many fears / anxieties and we appreciate it. We also wanted to welcome back Mr. Harrigan full time to HBT (as he was splitting his time between HBT and South Woods) and also welcome our new assistant principals Mr. Paul Naraine and Ms. Joey Waters. I am sad to report that two of our HBT staff members have lost a loved one over the extended weekend. One of our Special Education teachers, Anna Mason, lost her father-in-law and one of our FCS teachers, Chantel Pizzuto, lost her dad. Our deepest condolences are sent to them and their families during this difficult time.

B. We will be working closely with Mr. Bonanno and the administration to try and bring as many activities for the children we can, albeit in as safe a manner as possible. We will try to be flexible and original with our ideas, hosting events and/or assemblies outside or virtually. In order to bring some new and exciting events, we really need to make a push for fundraising to help pay for these activities. We know it's been a rough couple of years for everyone, so we really appreciate all the support you can provide. The most important is our membership drive, which is continually ongoing. Even if you are a member of another PTA, you need to renew your HBT membership each year. Sign yourself, your husband, your children. Membership brings benefits and programs directly for our students. We are also having our fall spirit wear sale – which is currently underway and ends at midnight on 9/12. More on this and membership during our committee reports.

C. We will also need to vote on our budget for the coming year. So please stay on, as we will be voting via zoom. We are working hard to try and make sure you are all informed and make it as easy as possible this year, so please feel free to check them out (as they are still a work in progress). Our new website is www.hbtpsa.org, where you can reach us at any time (click on the contact link). We also have a new Facebook and Instagram pages (thanks so much to our social media chairs, Jackie Cohen and Sam Newman, for their hard work).

D. For any new families that would like to introduce themselves to Mr. Bonanno and his team, feel free to stay on and we will extend the zoom session to make the introductions and answer any additional questions you may have.

III. Treasurer's PTA Funds Report as of 8/20/2021: (Miranda Tang)

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Checking Account:</u> | |
| Beginning Balance: | \$ 41,023.45 |
| Deposits: | \$ 1,249.00 |
| Disbursements: | \$ (2,718.00) |
| Ending Balance: | <u>\$ 39,554.45</u> |
| Savings Account: | \$ 6,241.59 |
| The total PTA Funds: | <u>\$ 45,796.04</u> |

IV. Correspondence: N/A

V. Principal's Report:

Thank you so much everyone for being here tonight. It's excited to work with you and the new team this year. We worked with the PTSA a little bit at the end of the summer. It set our expectations to get ready for the school year. Parents who have been in HBT and who are returning to HBT, it's exciting to have you back and of course new parents, welcome. This is great to see 84 participants in this meeting that's a high standard and hopefully we will continue throughout the year whether in person or virtual. We can keep the engagement going.

This year was much smoother. The custodians were remarkable. Thank you to the custodians and the secretaries. It has been a nice start. We had a curve ball with the buses. It has been a little challenging. The different time frame with pick up has been working. Hopefully at a certain point, if we are in a better place, we can probably ditch the stagger exits for pick up for all of you who have been in campus trying to get 30 something buses and two hundred cars at the same time with the staff cars it's just not safe or possible. We will pivot as time goes by but now thanks to everyone's cooperation it's working pretty well.

Lunch has been stressful. No place can fit people at 6 feet apart all at once. We have been alternating days; between eating in their advisory classes, cafeteria and the gym. We are also alternating days, two weeks at the time. And kids are rotating in and out during those times. We will continue to share information. Mr. Harrigan has been the point person along with the office and our lunch monitors in getting that running. We will continue to monitor and continue to evolve as we go. Our goal was to get more flexibility for kids to have choice during lunch. We just need to get into a routine, and we can start making some choices for kids. Lockers are pretty much assigned. Today the 6th grader had their lockers and tomorrow they will have another day to practice.

Tomorrow, it's also the last day of school before the 20th Anniversary of September 11th. We will do a moment of silence. We have a video that connect a couple our students and they were middle schoolers at the time when they were impacted; their father passed away in the World Trade Center. But what they have done with their lives to make a horrible situation positive. It will be a nice approach for our kids.

Tomorrow will be the last day of extended Advisory. We will go more a regular schedule on Monday. We like to build culture and comfort as the kids are coming back to school. We will work with everyone to make the kids and family comfortable. We want everyone in. We had a strong concern that it was going to be a rocky start but it has been good. The kids outdo my expectation, and we feel fortunate about that.

Extra Help will start in couple of weeks, teachers are putting their schedules together. Open House is on September 23rd, we will send the directions to that a week prior. Sports started today; it was nice to see the Football Team today. We will have Club Fair about two weeks from now for couple of days so kids can get a sense of what we are offering.

Washington DC trip for 8th graders? April 2021 – We have a hotel in mind. Hopefully, when we are in better path we can make decisions. What we have done traditional in the past is collect 4 payments. We are waiting longer and the tour company is not pushing on that. We are far away but it's not too far off yet either. If we think that we can do it safety, it's a possibility.

Fall Drama, we are working on it. I don't know if it will start immediately but there will be something that we will have two performances in musical and some other show. Tents, we received them. We will be able to use them at lunch. One of our challenges is desk. We have flexible furniture prior to the pandemic. We just have to get some decent seating for outside.

Now, I would like to introduce to the new administration:

Mrs. Waters, Assistant Principal– Thank you everybody for giving us the opportunity to say at least a virtual hello, it has been very nice to speak to many of you. I look forward to the days we are in-person and have the opportunity to connect even deeper. Your kids, as a whole because I am getting to know them as individual with are wonderful. We can see their smile under their masks as they are coming to school. I think they are excited to be here. Their energy has been nothing but positive. They are rolling with the adjustment as we are figure out the little kinks in the system. They are a big part that things are running well, helping everybody with lockers this past few days has given me the chance to chat with all of your kids and now all of our kids. Thank you for entrusting them to us for giving us an opportunity to be part of their lives and their growing. I do hope for those that I have not spoken with yet please do reach out and I am welcome to the opportunity to hear from you and how I can be an active part of this community. I am looking forward to a wonderful year with this great team with phenomenal teacher, clerical staff, custodians, securities and of course all of you as parents and as partners with us in educating the kids to this community. I thank you so much for your time.

Mr. Naraine, Assistant Principal–Good evening, everyone. Thank you so much, it has been a wonderful experience just the last few weeks. Your kids are absolutely wonderful. From the time they get off the bus to the good morning and just saying hello to us in the hallway. Then, even if we are lost in the building, they are always helpful. It's a pleasure to be part of this team and looking forward to working with everyone through this year and also getting to know your children. That's our focus this year - making connection over content because if you make connections then content is very easy.

Open Questions: Mr. Bonanno responding:

Do kids have to carry their tennis rackets with them all day? Do they fit in the lockers?

Tennis rackets probably should fit in lockers. Otherwise; we have some ability to lock some things up in the locker rooms. We have our physic teachers in the morning who keeps their door open and kids can bring their stuff there when they come. We are using the lockers kind of similar like last year just few kids at the time in there so they can change. Other than Football, I think must for this season can fit in the locker-room. When we get to lacrosse, baseball and softball that will be challenging because last year we used the chorus room as the storage location and now we are using it for the contractors. They may move out eventually, but we are

not there yet. The coaches and physical education teachers will help. I am glad we did the lockers the way we did, staggered it gave a little peace but it's nice to know that everyone can be there and put their things away.

We will try to have limits when they go to the lockers. Being at the locker all the time it's not necessary at good thing for middle school. It's negative interaction sometimes occurs. They don't need to go 7 times a day. We are working on a plan to balance it.

Bell Schedule – Full time one, we did a longer break between 8th and 9th period that kids can go to their lockers, and we will allow to bring their stuff to the 9th period. I have this fear that after doing this for all these years, if we say go back to your lockers and parents are sitting out waiting on the line, the line will never move. We are just going to make them go to the 9th period class with their stuff. Sports and clubs will be able to go at the end of the day. We understand that you have probably have elementary school pick-ups too and things to deal too.

Lunch Room – how does it work for the kids who want to buy snacks or drinks?

You can't buy. No point of purchasing from service right now at this point. Lunch can be ordered, and the lunch monitors have extra if there is an accident.

Any plans in making some connections with staff and the kids, even the 7th or 8th graders don't know each other's so are they any social distancing activities that you are planning to do?

There are some questions in organizing events like bingo. Right now, that's probably a little bit in a distance but not necessary too far. Our clubs are largely right after school and that will be an opportunity to meet other kids. Specially for the 6th graders coming from different Elementary school, one of the easy ways to break through it's to find students and kids with similar interest. 6th Grade social, they were some questions but right now a dance type thing is probably challenging indoors for us. Even some of the things we have to work out. Outdoor sports in the fall are pretty clear and consistent in what we can do. We are trying to work out in what we can do indoors and that it's still in a work in progress.

VI. BOE/Administration visitors:

Dr. Rogers, Superintendent of Syosset School District- Let's introduce the Board members:

Rob Gershon, Trustee – Greetings from the Board

Thank you for having here tonight. It's a pleasure to attend the PTA meeting particularly at the beginning of the year. I think we have all our Board members in attendance: Tracy Frankel, Tom Rotolo, Carol Cheng, Lisa Coscia, Susan Falkove, Brian Grieco, Anna Levitan, Shany Park. At the beginning of the year, we would like to go over few things. We would like to hear from the community if you have any concerns, you can find our individual e-mails address in the school website. You will find each individual board member with a profile. In addition, you can contact all the board members at once by clicking the link on the website or allboardmembers@syossetschools.org

If you have a comment or questions and can't make it to audience to public that's a good way to reach us. If you have a concern regarding your own child or something that it's going on at HBT. Your first contact should always be building level the teachers,

assistant principal or principal. If you find that you are not able to resolve the issue with them at that point will be appropriate to contact administration or the board.

I will remind you that we meet every month. It's listed in the school calendar and on the website. Our next meeting is going to be on September 13th at 8PM and it will be held at South Woods Middle School. When you come to the meeting and if you will like to address the board directly, we have a question up in our agenda called "Audience to the public" where you can come up to the podium and you can speak to the board regarding concerns. There are certain restrictions which you can find listed on the board website. Thank you for your participation in the PTA, most of us on the Board has been very involved in the PTA prior to joining the board and we appreciate your participation. We understand your participation how important it is for parents to be involved in what's going on in the school and we share your interest with that.

Tracy Frankel, Board President

It's nice to see you. My last child just finished at HBT so I will miss HBT. Mr. Bonano and Mr. Harrigan so we know that Mrs. Waters and Mr. Naraine contribution to HBT will make an incredible impact to the district. I just want to echo Rob, the PTA is a tremendous asset in Syosset. It really values open communication that we have. The board is centered around improvement and realizing our potential every year and seeing how far we can go with that. The PTA feels comfortable offering their opinions and their hopes and dreams for the district too. That's something that we really value and we listen. Thanks for that and keep it up.

Tom Rotolo, Vice President

I wish we can be in person. Hopefully soon, we can be in person. I want to thank everyone who volunteers. It means a lot as you know we volunteer, and this is a mission for us. We appreciate your volunteering, we appreciate the principals, the administration and that's why this is a great district because we have so much community involvement and we are very fortunate that parents have the time to do it. Mr. Bonano name means "Bon anno" in Italian, that we are going to have a "good year" this year safe and hopefully we can go back to normal as soon as possible. Thank you so much!

Carol Cheng, Trustee

Good evening, everyone. I just want to welcome everyone back even though it's virtually. Hopefully, we can see each more in person, in the future and hopefully in the monthly board of Ed meetings. Thank you and have a great and safe school year.

Susan Falkove, Trustee

Hi just want to welcome everyone back! I hope everyone had a great summer and a lot of rest. I just want to thank everybody. PTA is very special to me, and I know how many hours you guys spend out of your lives in your day and away from your family to make the kids experience better and you guys do an amazing job and we really appreciate everything you guys do. I just want to let you know that we are here, we are always here to help everybody. Being in the Board is a very special thing and we are so happy to do it. If you have any questions or needs, please reach out to us. Hope everyone has a healthy and safe and wonderful year. Thanks for everything you do.

Lisa Coscia, Trustee

Hello and Welcome back. I wish everybody a happy, healthy and fun school year. Thank you! We hope to see you in the meetings.

Brian Grecco, Trustee

Hi everybody, thank you all. I see so many familiar faces. I got two little ones at HBT right now and hope I can get to know everybody.

Shany Park, Trustee

Hi everybody. I am glad to see everybody and happy to see you all. Let's have a great year. Thank you.

Dr. Rogers, Superintendent of Syosset School District

Welcome back everyone! I hope you are having a wonderful start to the year. I know this wasn't the start to the year we had hoped for and we were expecting that we were going to be in person together and early part of the summer looked like things were turning in the right direction obviously things have changed a little bit. The good news is that the predictions that we got from the Nassau County Health Department that the Delta wave was going to crash starting in the fall appears to be starting and our approach to the school year all along has been that we want to get things back to as close to normal for our kids as we possibly can. That's still the goal, we are going to go week by week and monitor the conditions. If we believe that things are getting a little safer and there are activities that we can safely add back for students, we are going to do that. That was our approach all last year, we started out in a very conservative spot and we methodically added things back one at the time and wait and see if we upset anything. If it looks like we are stable we will add something else back and by making those slow methodical changes we avoided ever having to retrieve and ever having to feel like we lost a sense of momentum in trying to get back to the education experience that we want for everyone. The opportunity for you as a parent to be closely engaged in what's going on in the building and all the wonderful activities and social opportunities that PTA provides, we want to get that going as well. That remains the goal, I am optimistic that is the goal that we are going to realize during this school year and not that we must wait for the consequent school year to get there. We know that obviously, we are in a little bit of a wave right now we are starting with more cases that we started last September. On the other hand, we also know that there are a lot of students and staff who are vaccinated that mitigates in the opposite direction.

We have added back a lot of things that were not here last year. The High School is going every day that's a big one. Sports are starting up this Fall instead of having abbreviated season in the Spring. In middle schools, we are back to 9th period a day with electives that students love and enjoy. Students are changing rooms and lockers which is exciting. All the things that are part of the middle school experience are coming back and again we know that there are things in the future like the DC trip and other questions that everyone has but it's a little too soon to answer them, but our goal and hope is to preserve as much as we can of what makes this experience so unique and wonderful.

I will say, it is not all rainbow and unicorns obviously... the busing has been a real challenge for the beginning of the school year. The first couple of weeks are always bumpy with busing. There are new drivers, still learning routes and the kids at the High School have to learn which bus they must get on. Even though there are 20 buses on the loop to get on at the same time. This is

by far the bumpiest first week I had in my 8 years in Syosset. Some of that is due in large part to in driver shortage. Our bus company, Huntington Coach is having to scramble to try and make sure they have coverage for all the routes. I did not enjoy sending the email I sent last night but also, I didn't feel comfortable not giving parents a heads up in case something did happen this morning. In partnership with you, I wanted to be transparent about what we are dealing with so that you know. That does not mean that we are passive about this. Mr. Cardillo and I have been working very hard with our transportation department with Huntington Coach, we are trying to put contingency plan into place that will take a little longer to implement. We have been aggressive and pro-active about trying to deal with this problem and understanding the limitations that Huntington Coach has. It will get better; my understanding is that today was significantly better than last Friday. That doesn't surprise me as some of the first weeks are shaky a little bit but we still have some concerns about if there are drivers that are unable to drive, do we have enough substitute to cover for them ensure that every kid has a seat on the bus. This year it's going to present us with new challenges that we will need to adapt with. Your patience and your understanding and ideas are appreciated and welcome.

I know that we are getting this work done as smooth as we possibly can and giving our kids the best possible school year that they can have. We are standing in this remarkable period we are living through. Back in the Spring, we were awarded a grant to provide a Pre-K program for as many as 119 students in the school district. It took us by surprise because it was a grant that we received but we didn't apply for it. We didn't want to turn the money down. We didn't want to lose the opportunity to serve students or families that might be able to benefit. It might mean someone to go back full time to work or help the family economically. We have been working hard in trying to invent the Pre-K program in the month since. We are very close to be able to make an announcement. It will work like a lottery program. There will be more information about the Pre-K program to come. Welcome back and always happy to take questions.

VII. Standing Committee Reports:

A. Audit – Liz Wolkof & Jen Poitrimol

The audit committee met in August and completed their report which will be read for information only now.

Liz - The audit committee has examined the books of the treasurer of HB Thompson for the period July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 and found them to be in order. The audit report will be adopted at the October General Meeting.

Thank you to the Audit committee members: Liz Wolkoff, Rosemarie Hardina, Maria McDermott. We will hear their report again in October.

B. Curriculum Enrichment – Liz Wolkof

We have sent to Mr. Harrigan and Mr. Bonanno an assembly with Mr. Marshall. It will be later on. There will be an author visit. Mr. Saltzman had ideas and we will need fundraising. The more money we make the better programs we can provide.

C. Fundraising / Clothing Sale – Jen Abraham

- a. Spirit Sale ending in October
- b. Foodie cart coming out
- c. Gift cards-really easy, no fees for AMEX and Visa

- d. Sale before Hanukkah and Christmas
- e. Pie Sale from White Post Farm. Information coming soon
- f. Cookie dough and popcorn sale
- g. Spirit Sale in Spring as well

Please support your PTSA and show your HBT spirit by purchasing some great apparel from Woodbury Sports! Items include hoodies, tees and accessories. **Hurry the Sale ends Sunday 9/12.** See all the options and order at the link in our newsletter, website or from the flyer included in our Welcome Back Packet.

D. Membership/Student Directory – Dana Kralstein

- a. Please join the PTSA for the 2021-22 school year! Support your children's education by signing up online! Spouses and children can also join our PTSA.
- b. Our free online directory is only available to paid PTSA adult members so please sign up this year! I updated the directory over the weekend, so if you are suddenly locked out, you probably must join for this year. Look for an email from the Directory Spot when your directory account has been reactivated for this year. Your same login info will work from past years once you receive that email.
- c. Once you join the PTSA, please understand it takes me several days to update the directory. If it has been over 3 days since you signed up, feel free to email to check in.
- d. All of the info I have has been updated in the directory. If you have a 6th grader, I added the same info you had in your elementary school directory. If your child went to South Grove, you would probably want to update your contact information. Any new students or changes to your info, please fill out the form online or just email me directly. If this is a new sibling but you are already in the directory, just email me the family connection and I can copy the info across your kids. If nothing has changed about your contact info, you DO NOT need to fill out a google form.

E. Cultural Unity / Buddy Program – Farrah Mozawalla

The Syosset Council of PTA's Cultural Unity Committee is proud to be a sponsor of the Buddy Program. – Please visit the Syosset Council of PTAs website to participate – <https://syossetcouncilofptas.org/buddy-program-main>
You can also email them at syocouncilcultural@gmail.com

F. SEPTA- Deanna Marmor

SEPTA is the Special Education PTA and is proud to serve and represent every school in Syosset Central School District. Our membership is open to everyone, and we focus our efforts on students who receive services from the District. These services can include speech, OT, PT, resource room, instructional support, gifted programs, counseling, nursing services, self-contained/inclusion classes, audiological/vision assistance and early intervention. We encourage you to join SEPTA. Membership is \$12 per person. You can join [online](#) or fill out [the](#) form in our Welcome Packet and send it in. The first SEPTA meeting date is 9/29/21 at 7:45 pm.

G. Social Media – Jackie Cohen / Sam Newman

New Facebook and Instagram pages as well as a new website. Check out our page on Facebook at HBT PTSA and follow us on Instagram at HBTPTSA. *Please note: You must answer the group questions, to get access to the group.*

VIII. New Business

a) Vote on 2021-2022 Budget

We will be using a poll to vote on the budget – please cast your vote once you see the poll opened. Only current members may vote. Members voted and budget stands approved. Thank you.

IX. Dates to Remember

- a) September 12 - Last day to order spirit wear for our Fall Apparel sale
- b) September 13 - Monthly Board of Education Meeting
- c) September 16 - NO SCHOOL
- d) September 23 – Open House (Virtual)
- e) September 23 & 24 - Picture Day
- f) October 7 – PTSA Meeting

Meeting Adjourned: 8:56 PM
Jessica Peredo, Recording Secretary

Mr. Bonanno held an open discussion with new families after the meeting. No minutes were taken, since PTSA meeting was adjourned.

Attendees:

Jennifer Poitrimol
Karen Ostrick
Jessica Peredo

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| Rosie DeStefano | Liz Wolkoff |
| Sesil Kim | Angela Yun |
| Rosanne Ruppel | Jessica Goldberg |
| Susan Suriel | kbonanno |
| Liz Wolkoff | Brigid Ann Gold |
| hina imran | Rinku Thomas |
| Alissa Rogovin | michelle monegro |
| Lucille Polidoro | Paul N |
| Shira Zatcoff | Robert Gershon |
| Miranda Tang | Susan Suriel |
| Jennifer Poitrimol | Jason Ross |
| Jason Ross | Brigid Ann Gold |
| Elaine Jung | Sesil Kim |

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| Jenn Palaganas | Rosie DeStefano |
| Jessica Goldberg | Elaine Jung |
| Shira Zatcoff | Nina Grieco |
| Miranda Tang | katherinezimmerman |
| Paul Naraine (Paul N) | Vicky Pan |
| kbonanno | Jordana Altman |
| Lucille Polidoro | Christina Ng |
| Eric Steinberger | Farrah Mozawalla |
| michelle monegro | Rinku Thomas |
| Nina Grieco | Sherri Smith |
| Amy Kenner | Jonathan Brody |
| Sara Azizollahoff | Tara Ginsburg |
| Jen Abraham (noahabraham) | melissa forman |
| Renée Borkenstein | sara iPhone |
| Michelle Verre | Mary Kim |
| Sara Azizollahoff | Amy Kern |
| Nanda Rajagopalan | Liz Wolkoff |
| Linda DiGeronimo | Dana Kralstein |
| Jann | Liza Oyaga |
| Alissa Rogovin | Winnie Yau |
| Wanchin Brotchner | Gina Oommen |
| hina imran | Heather Friedland |
| Amy Hornstein | Christina Fanelli |
| Amanda Schlan | Michele iPhone X |
| Jessica Peredo | Min An (Min) |
| janine comanducci | Jack Ostrick |
| robin' Greenstein | Donna Lee |
| Allison Berch | Melissa Capie |
| April Sontag | Irene |
| Christian Harrigan | Shari Feig |
| jackie cohen | Gillian Tepper Gillian |
| Christian Harrigan | Dana Holzer (Holzer) |
| April Sontag | Cheryl Chen |
| Joey Waters | Fengling Liu |
| Sundeep Singh's iPhone | Gabby Platz |
| Pam Bahiri | Rebecca's iPhone |
| Mimi Tang Wong | Christina Ng |
| Christine Garzilli | Leslie Schlenoff |
| Cheng Lu | Hiedy Kim |

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| samantha newman | Tom Rogers |
| Barbara krilov | Sarah Landow |
| Nick Wang | Gina Oommen |
| Elaine B Feigenbaum | Doris JM |
| Tracey | Eric Steinberger |
| Alice Hom | Brian Grieco |
| Bharti's iPhone | Carol Cheng (葉欽慧) |
| Rebecca Sophir | Tracy Frankel |
| Rebecca Kusnetz (Rebecca Sophir) | Shany Park |
| Dana Kuropatkin | Susan Falkove (Falkove# Ethan) |
| Dianxiang Chen (Diana) | Tom Rotolo |
| Charles Cardillo | Lisa Coscia |